

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND FISHERIES AND
WILDLIFE
IN OPPOSITION TO L.D. 291
“AN ACT TO ALLOW THE HUNTING OF SMALL GAME ANIMALS WITH A
SLINGSHOT”**

SPONSORED BY: Senator CUSHING of Penobscot

CO-SPONSORED BY:

Representative DAVITT of Hampden
Senator WHITEMORE of Somerset,
Representative WADSWORTH of Hiram,
Representative ESPLING of New Gloucester,
Representative FARRIN of Norridgewock,
Representative GUERIN of Glenburn,
Representative ALLEY of Beals

DATE OF HEARING: February 24, 2015

Good afternoon Senator Davis, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Judy Camuso, Wildlife Division Director at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Department, in opposition to **L.D. 291**.

This bill allows the use of a slingshot to hunt certain small game species designated by the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

The Department is opposed to this bill. Slingshots vary widely in their functionality and efficacy. There are no clear industry standards for the “draw weight” of a sling shot, nor the caliber weight, or substance of the projectile. A pebble can be used as a projectile in a slingshot. In addition, the rubber portion of the slingshot disintegrates at varying rates; partly depending on how long they have been on the shelf, so ensuring the “draw weight” of a slingshot is very challenging. The Department is concerned that the use of slingshots would not be efficient at delivering a clean, lethal shot and would cause crippling and injuring of wildlife.

The Department is also concerned about several issues surrounding enforcement, such as: would a youth that is outdoors with a slingshot in his or her possession always need a small game hunting license and always need to be accompanied by a qualified adult? How could we enforce the use of a slingshot from a motorized vehicle, such as an ATV or a snowmobile? Similarly, hunters using slingshots would have to be ten feet off any paved road. A small rock or pebble can be used as a projectile in a sling shot, so “loading” a slingshot is quite different from loading a shotgun.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time or during the work session.